

Triple-Beam Balance

The ability to measure accurately the mass of an object is an important skill in the science laboratory. You can use a triple-beam balance to measure mass. As you can see, the balance has several parts. The pan is the flat surface on which you place the object to be measured. Under the pan is the adjustment knob used to “zero” the balance. The three beams show the mass of the object. Notice that each beam has a different scale. The scale of the middle beam is from 0–500 grams and measures an object to the nearest 100 grams. The scale of the beam in back is from 0–100 grams and measures an object to the nearest 10 grams. The scale of the beam in front is from 0–10 grams and measures an object to the nearest tenth of a gram. Notice that each beam carries a weight called a rider. You find the mass of an object by placing it on the pan and moving the riders until the pointer on the right of the balance stays pointed to zero.

